UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Agricultural Economics

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LABOR SITUATION IN SUGAR BEETS
MALHEUR COUNTY, OREGON, AND VICINITY 1/

FARM LABOR STRUCTURE

The sugar beet industry in Malheur County dates back to 1935. Very small acreages were planted in that and the following year but the industry started in earnest in 1937. Work was started on the construction of the Amalgamated Sugar Company plant in that year and it began operation in 1938. Acreages have increased as rapidly as Government regulations would permit. Figures in "The Beet Grower," published by the Amalgamated Sugar Company which contracts all the local acreage, indicate that acreages in the district in 1939 were 16,321, in 1940, 19,068, and in 1941, 14,181. The contracted acreage in 1942 is 29,426, or more than double that of the previous year. Approximately half of this acreage is located in Malheur County and the remainder in adjacent Idaho counties.

This area has only recently been reclaimed for agricultural purposes. Even yet five and one-half million acres in Malheur County are devoted to grazing as compared with 137,000 acres in crops. The 1940 Census of Agriculture indicates 87,000 acres were in hay, 6,000 in corn, 17,000 in wheat, 11,400 in barley, and 3,400 in oats. In that year there were 6,293 acres in sugar beets, 4,507 acres in potatoes, and 1,815 acres in vegetables including onions, lettuce, and peas.

Acreages in sugar beets and in beans have increased greatly since 1939. There will be 4,000 acres of beans this year and 12,800 acres in sugar beets.

Labor requirements have risen rapidly with the increase in field and truck crops. The beet companies have been instrumental in bringing outside labor into the area in order to thin and harvest the beet crop. The peak labor need in the county is at beet-thinning time when from 1,000 to 1,500 workers are needed to handle this operation. The topping and loading operation in the fall can be spread over a considerably longer time.

This is an area of small farms averaging from 50 to 60 acres in size and with 20 to 30 acres in sugar beets. The growers use labor only at the peak seasons and have very little use for it from December 1 to May 1. Work in the onions, potatoes, lettuce, hay, and seed crops follow the beet thinning and gives employment through the season until the beet harvest.

The population is very sparse, averaging less than 2 persons per square mile and offers but little opportunity for the development of a local labor supply. Family workers are much more numerous than hired workers, numbering 3,009 and

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1/ As of June 12, 1941. By Wm. H. Metzler, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Berkeley, California

701 respectively in March 1940. In September 1939 there were 2,764 family workers and 1,656 hired workers. None of these figures, however, represent the peak of the labor season. Of the 2,545 farms enumerated in the 1940 census, 1,467 had paid out wages for hired labor. Average wage payments, however, were quite small, indicating a short period of employment per farm.

The yield of sugar beets in this area is quite high, 16.9 tons per acre last year, and growers feel that they could meet any competition, if they only had large enough labor supply to handle the situation.

THE FARM LABOR SITUATION

Some difficulty was experienced in obtaining farm labor for the beet harvest last fall and workers took advantage of the situation to bid wages above the Government level. Subsequently when sugar company officials tried to get a sign-up of 30,000 acres so as to keep their plants operating to capacity they had difficulty in persuading the farmers that sufficient labor would be available to handle their beets. Appeals were made on the basis of patriotism and on the promise that the sugar company would bring in 4,000 Mexicans to take care of the crop. Company officials asked the FSA to open its mobile camp, which it refused to do as the thinning season was still a month away and the FSA didn't care to have a group of workers on its hands with nothing for them to do.

Adverse weather conditions complicated the situation. The early beets came up very slowly and spring rains kept the workers out of the field for the first two weeks of the thinning season. The demand for workers then became quite acute.

According to the manager of the Amalgamated Sugar Company, one-half of the beet thinning is normally done by local labor while the other half is done by transient Mexicans and whites who come up from California. Very few of these transient workers put in an appearance this year, and they usually went to large growers who had employed them for the past several years.

These transient workers, furthermore, were very hard to please. They wanted $15 an acre for the thinning, good housing, and other advantages which they had been able to obtain further south. The farmers were unwilling to meet their demands and they made relatively few contracts with these workers. On the other hand, their demands did raise the wage rates for thinning.

Growers began exerting pressure on the sugar company to do something to save their beets. According to a representative of the company, it searched for workers all over the coast and paid transportation costs for more than 500 workers. These people proved to be but little more satisfactory than those who had come in earlier.

Chief sufferers in the situation were those farmers who had no experience in rustling best thinners, those who had no housing facilities, those whose fields were weedy or in poor condition, those who had planted late, and those who lived farther away from the centers of population.

Estimates as to the amount of labor shortage vary widely. The USES reports indicate that only 700 people have been working while 4,000 are actually necessary at the peak of the season. Beet company officials indicated that 1,000 Japanese, in addition to the local labor, could have handled the situation nicely. The 290 who did come did not arrive until the latter part of May when much of the thinning was already done.

In contrast with these statements are the estimates of the county agent to the effect that a total of 1,200 workers could handle all the thinning. This would be but a few hundred more than are already at work. The local Farm Security Supervisor was inclined in the same direction. He felt that an additional thousand workers in the community would mean that some people would have to be carried on public assistance rolls all the time.

Discussions with farmers indicated there was much more hysteria over shortage than was actually necessary. Some had even thinned beets that were hardly of commercial grade. The hysteria was fomented partially by the sugar beet company which had many thousands of dollars out in crop loans to the growers.

The local USES manager is very anxious to obtain the good will of the growers and of the sugar company. He reminded the interviewer that no basis existed for accurate estimates and did not care to have his figures examined as they were "confidential."

Sugar company figures on the proportion of the acreage that had been thinned were also "confidential" as company officials were not willing to tell the farmers that the sugar beets were 85 percent thinned for fear that they might "let down" on the job. Many of their statements to the interviewer were made for "strategic" reasons and did not tally with the figures taken from their records. They regard it as essential to get as many workers into the area as possible so that their development of the beet industry in the area will not be hindred. They feel that their area is ideally suited to sugar beets and that enough additional acreage could be planted to beets to supply another factory.

THE PLOW-UP OF SUGAR BEETS

The plow-up of beets in this area has normally been very light. This is partially due to the fact that only the best acreage has been planted to beets. Amalgamated Sugar Company records indicate that of 13,989 acres planted in the district in 1941, 13,699 acres were harvested. In addition, 146 acres that had been contracted for were not planted, so the total loss in acreage was only 436.

Total loss of beet acreage up to June 6 of this year was 919 acres. Largest loss was of between 300 and 400 acres damaged by a severe hail storm. Marginal and submarginal lands had been planted to beets this year and some of the loss was due to a poor stand of beets on such acreages or to the fact that the land was too weedy. According to a field man for the Amalgamated Sugar Company, the total acreage of good beets plowed under because they had become too big to thin was between 165 and 170.

There is still a possibility that more beets will be plowed under. As in case of acreages already plowed up, the reason will be largely that the stand of beets was quite poor and that the weeds have badly outstripped them. Agricultural agency representatives in the county indicated that quite a few fields of this type still existed.

Statements of the various sugar company officials have not been entirely consistent as to how much of the plow-up has been due to labor shortage. Some of them feel under great obligation to overstate the loss due to labor shortage in order to get permission to import as many Japanese or Mexican laborers as possible.

Growers also use the threat of plow-up in order to obtain workers from the sugar company as soon as possible. They feel that the sugar company virtually promised them a labor supply and are using a great amount of pressure in order to make the company live up to its promises.

Statements of plow-up of beets in this area due to shortage of labor should be regarded with great caution. Releases to the press have not been at all careful in indicating what the situation actually is. Instead of this they have been made in an effort to obtain as many outside laborers as possible.

WAGES, HOURS, AND PERQUISITES

In previous years the minimum wage rates established by the Government have been regarded as fixed rates. These rates in 1940 and 1941 were:

Thinning, $8 per acre or 40 cents per hour.
First hoeing, $2 per acre or 35 cents per hour.
Second and subsequent hoeings $1 per acre or 35 cents per hour.

The established rates for 1942 are:

Thinning, $9.50 per acre or 45 cents per hour.
First hoeing $3 per acre or 40 cents per hour.
Second and subsequent hoeings $2 per acre or 40 cents per hour.

Practically none of the beets were thinned this year at the Government rate. The earliest contracts were made at $10 per acre and some farmers have recently had to pay as much as $15 or $16. Most of the beets, however, were thinned at around $12 per acre. Wage rates were originally forced up by the Mexicans who moved in from California and asked for $15 an acre.

The use of students for thinning has brought up the issue of hours of labor. The farmers have been notified by the AAA office that they are to employ no children under 14 years of age and that those between 14 and 16 can only work 8 hours in any one day. There has been some agitation for relaxation of these regulations but AAA officials indicated that all they could do was to enforce it.

The larger growers in the area have cabins and camps on their farms. These have been of great advantage in obtaining and keeping a supply of laborers. FSA camps

in the area have been "raided" by such farmers who persuaded the families to move into their own cabins.

There are two mobile FSA camps in the area. The one at Nyssa had 56 occupants, mostly Mexican, until the Japanese came in. The camp at Fruitland at the present time has only 4 or 5 families in it. Camp managers explain that the transient workers have not put in an appearance this year and the few that have come in have stayed but a short time. A semi-permanent FSA camp is also to be erected near Nyssa this summer. It is badly needed as the equipment at the present camp at Nyssa is both old and inadequate.

Officials of the sugar company have been quite critical of the FSA camp facilities which have broken down on several occasions since such a large number of Japanese have come to it. They also indicate that such camps are constructed for families who have a large amount of their own equipment but that their facilities are inadequate eiyher for single men, such as ordinarily do the beet work, or for the Japanese who have had to leave all their household goods behind. The company has had to furnish the camp with cooking utensils, beds and bedding, electric lights, and other equipment.

USE OF CITIZEN LABOR

The necessity for using citizen workers in order to meet the labor situation was suggested as early as the middle of February by local students of labor needs. At that time the secretary of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce suggested that businessmen should close their stores one day in the week in order to handle the sugar beets and other crops. Actual plans for this activity were worked out during the latter part of May when it became clear that outside labor would not be available in sufficient numbers to do the job. Idaho towns were already using students and other citizens in the beet fields.

Arrangements were made for all stores to remain closed until 11 A. M. and all citizens except members of the medical profession were to work in the beet fields from 5 A. M. to 10 A. M. These hours were later changed to 7 A. M. - 12 noon by the citizens of Ontario who found the other hours to be too long. Appropriate placards where furnished for their show windows by the U. S. Employment Service officials. These read:

"Closed until 1 P. M.
Daily Except Saturday
Everyone Thinning Beets"

By this time citizen laborers were being recruited in many towns and cities in Idaho. The local movement started off with a good deal of enthusiasm. Townspeople went out in their own cars and thinned beets because they felt that it was part of the war effort. They went out every day for a week in Ontario and for two weeks in Nyssa and Vale. Closing of stores in these towns was practically 100 percent.

There was some opposition to the idea in all these communities. Some people felt it necessary to be sick or to be away on business at the time. The largest numbers to go out on U. S. Employment Service orders were 125 each at Ontario and Nyssa and 72 at Vale, according to the manager of the U. S. Employment Service.

Estimates as to the total acreage thinned by these volunteer workers varied from 300 to 3,000. Two moral effects of the effort are regarded, however, as being even more important than the acreage thinned. First of all, it encouraged the farmers to refrain from plowing up their beets; in the second place, it encouraged them to use members of their own families for field work. Quite a number of farmers had questioned the propriety of such labor for white people. According to the manager of the Amalgamated Sugar Company, it had resulted directly or indirectly in saving from 3,000 to 4,000 acres of beets.

Another aspect of the volunteer labor situation was in connection with the schools. All of them closed the school year early in order to permit school children to help with the beet thinning. This also made their buses available for hauling workers to and from the fields.

At the time this report is written, approximately 25 students meet each morning in front of the U. S. Employment Service office and are taken by farmers to their fields. According to Employment Service officials they thin from one-tenth to one-third acre per day.

Many comments are made to the effect that people have gotten so "soft" that they are unwilling to get out and do real physical labor. Such people feel that "they don't have to work like that in order to make a living." Some farmers also stated that they would "rather not raise beets than to have to get out and thin them." Failure to do this type of labor will probably limit its use to periods of extreme necessity.

THE IMPORTATION OF JAPANESE LABOR

There were a small number of Japanese, 369, engaged in farming in Malheur County at the beginning of the war with Japan. These people were generally hard-working, law-abiding, and successful. Their loyalty was unquestioned except in the case of two Japanese who were arrested at Vale in April 1942. The Eastern Oregon Observer of April 16, 1942, described them as Japanese aliens who had been farming near Ontario. Guns, short wave radios, and 14,000 yen in Japanese money were found in their possession. They were subsequently freed.

After the outbreak of the war Japanese began to filter into the county from coastal areas. The total number coming in during this period has been estimated at from 100 to 150. Some of the people made attempts to lease or to buy land. Others took such jobs as were available. Some are still living in highly undesirable conditions in labor camps or in rude habitations they have erected for themselves.

Local citizens, newspapers, and civic groups expressed opposition to this movement by the Japanese. The Chamber of Commerce at both Vale and Nyssa passed resolutions against permitting the Japanese to own or lease land in the area. A similar resolution was passed by the Malheur County Agricultural Labor Subcommittee which recommended the use of Japanese as laborers but that no land be leased or sold to them.

The most drastic action against the Japanese was taken by the Vale Chamber of Commerce. According to the Eastern Oregon Observer of March 19, it wired Governor Sprague of Oregon in part as follows: "We will not allow these people to locate in our community unless: They are colonized or concentrated in groups; that the U. S. Army provide ample supervision and keep them under surveillance at all times; that they be not permitted to buy or lease lands; that they be taken from this area at the end of the emergency.....we urge that immediate action be taken before the people take matters into their own hands."

Governor Sprague replied to their resolution by stating that Japanese who were American citizens could not be prevented from purchasing or leasing lands either by the State or by the Federal Government.

The situation was further complicated by a report that a Japanese concentration camp was to be located near Nyssa to house 10,000 evacuees. This resulted in still more resolutions against selling or leasing land to the Japanese.

The basis of the opposition to the Japanese was expressed as follows by the Secretary of the Nyssa Chamber of Commerce. "The Japanese are simply adept at raising the crops we have here. They have low standards of living and can drive Americans out of the business. We have to protect what has been built up here."

The infiltration of Japanese was stopped by the U. S. War Department order freezing the Japanese in their existing residences until they could be evacuated. In the meantime, however, the idea had developed that the Japanese might be a good source of farm labor. The idea was pushed by officials of the Amalgamated Sugar Company who guaranteed transportation costs, housing, and safe conduct. Their petition was denied by the military authorities who ruled that the Japanese be maintained in larger camps and under military guard. The request was eventually referred to President Roosevelt, however, and he granted it. The request had been for from 500 to 1,500 Japanese and 400 were to be sent.

The program of getting the Japanese into the area proved to be a difficult one. Military authorities were loathe to relax their regulations and many of the Japanese were afraid to come to an area in which the people had passed such strong resolutions against them. Local Japanese assisted in the situation by wiring to those in the camp that they would be entirely safe here.

The first group of Japanese arrived in the area on May 22. There were only 15 in the group instead of the 400 that had been promised. On May 28, 43 more Japanese arrived. There are 289 in the local FSA camp at the present time. Not all of these are workers. Some are too young and others are too old but, in general, both men and women, boys and girls have engaged in the beet thinning.

The Amalgamated Sugar Company has $40 per person invested in the evacuees. This includes transportation, meals, cooking equipment, bedding, electric lights, and other expenditures. They have filled the local FSA camp to overflowing. In fact, facilities have broken down on several occasions and the camp is not entirely prepared to handle that number of people. The whites and Mexicans who had been there previously, a total of 56 in all, had to be moved elsewhere.

The United States Employment Service set up a branch office at the camp and together with the sugar company keeps the Japanese employed as continuously as possible. All farmers who have had an opportunity to use the Japanese are enthusiastic about their work. They do the work very conscientiously and do not attempt to bid up the wage rate as many workers have done. Although a large number of the Japanese were unused to farm labor they kept at the job quite steadily.

Some farmers have tried to monopolize the Japanese workers by keeping them for other tasks after their beet thinning was done. The sugar company has tried to prevent this. Other farmers appear at the camp and ask for them for lettuce and onion work. Company officials realize that they will have a difficult time to keep the Japanese from going into these and other types of farm work.

The Japanese are paid the regular wage scale, though some farmers are inclined to offer a premium in order to get them. They are hauled to and from the camp each day in sugar company trucks. They seem quite happy in their new location and are writing to their friends to come and join them. They have a community kitchen in which they prepare their own meals. A deputy sheriff is on duty at all times to see that everything goes as it should. The Japanese are granted permits to go to town and obtain necessities and the like. This privilege is used quite sparingly, however.

Company officials indicate that the Japanese will be needed badly until December 1. In fact, they state that they will actually need 1,000 in order to be able to handle all the beets and other crops. The Japanese can be used in the lettuce, potato, and seed crops to very good advantage. Their officials feel that it would be entirely safe for the Japanese to live in the farmers' camps, which usually are much more comfortable than the FSA camps. Two CCC camps are available, however, which are also in good condition. An additional FSA camp is under construction, so it is felt that adequate facilities will exist for all the workers that they ask for.

The Japanese are working under a desire to prove their loyalty to the United States. There has been one exception to this rule. One evacuee was quite bitter and influenced eight other men into activities and expressions that were not deemed desirable. These Japanese were returned to the Portland concentration camp. The other members of the camp were reported as quite happy to have them sent away.

The feeling is still common in the area that they do not want the Japanese to own or rent land and that they should be returned when the emergency is over. A number of farmers who use year-around labor would be glad to have Japanese families stay with them through the winter. In general, however, there is very little need

for hired labor during the winter months.

Within the last several days 25 Japanese workers have been sent to labor camps on two of the large farms in the area. To what extent this action may immobilize some of the Japanese workers is a question.

Many of the townspeople express resentment against the Japanese, partially due to the fact that a large number of the people in this area have relatives in the Army in Australia, Hawaii, and other Pacific territories. They feel that the Japanese should not be cared for so well nor be paid such high wages when our own soldiers who are prisoners of the Japanese are probably being mistreated. Only one instance of actual violence was reported. In a neighboring town an American farmer saw a Japanese in a hardware store. He was somewhat distraught over the recent loss of a son at Bataan and seized a pitchfork and made for the Japanese shouting, "There's one of those _____ Japs now." He was prevented from doing any bodily injury. The situation does illustrate, however, that if many losses are experienced in the Pacific area, local difficulties may easily result.

ACTIVITIES OF VARIOUS AGENCIES

a. Farm Labor Subcommittee

The Farm Labor Subcommittee was organized in February with the County Agent as chairman and the manager of the U. S. Employment Office, as secretary. Several farmers and a representative of the sugar company were also on the committee. Major activity at its first meeting on February 26 was to discuss ways and means of keeping the farmers from bidding against each other for labor. There was some discussion of conducting a farm labor survey but the task was regarded as too great.

In March the Subcommittee was approached on the question of utilizing Japanese as farm laborers. The group recommended that they be employed as laborers but that no land should be leased or sold to them. U. S. Employment Service officials indicated that citizen laborers would have to be used in place of the 2,000 transients who came into the area in previous years to do the seasonal farm work.

Subsequent activities of the Committee were along the lines of securing citizen and Japanese labor and were pretty well merged into activities of the Chamber of Commerce, the sugar company, and the Employment Service. The Committee has acted largely as a clearing-house for ideas and information and the drive for laborers has been conducted by the other agencies mentioned.

b. The Chamber of Commerce

Chambers of Commerce in the area have been highly alert on the labor situation. The secretary of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce suggested as early as the middle of February that methods of using citizen labor would have to be organized. The Chamber of Commerce met with the Farm Labor Subcommittee in regard to the employment of Japanese and later wired to the War Relocation Authority, to Governor Sprague,

ent to President Roosevelt in regard to the use of Japanese.

As indicated in the section on "Importation of Japanese Labor," the Chamber of Commerce at Vale had wired the Governor to keep the Japanese out before citizens took the matter in their own hands. This acted as quite a handicap in the importation of the Japanese who were afraid of the type of treatment they might receive in this locality.

c. The United States Employment Service

The United States Employment office has been very active in recruiting defense workers and the manager claims to have sent 800 from this area to defense industries. Farmers have been inclined as a result to be rather critical of the Service because it has drained their labor supply away at wages with which they are entirely unable to compete. A second charge against them is that they are unable to supply any workers able to meet the farmers' needs. There is no deep feltantagonism against this agency, however, such as exists in California.

This office works very closely with the sugar company and in some ways expresses the point of view. Their reports, for example, indicate that 4,000 people are needed for the beet thinning. Actually from 1,200 to 1,500 workers can do the job. The beet company is anxious to have a surplus of labor to dangle before the farmers' eyes so that they will not be inclined to grow other crops that require less labor than sugar beets.

The Employment Service has been highly active both in bringing about the importation of Japanese labor and in organizing citizens to work in the fields. It is now engaged with the sugar company in using the Japanese labor to the best advantage.

The manager of the sugar company indicates that the U. S. Employment Service could be much more effective in meeting a situation like the present one if they had more power to recruit and transport workers. They do not have large enough a field force to go out and get the workers that are needed. Consequently, the sugar company must take all such responsibilities on itself and it is not well-equipped to do such a job.

A handbill indicative of the effort of this agency to obtain workers is attached.

d. The Sugar Company

All the beet acreage in this area has been contracted by the Amalgamated Sugar Company, which feels something of a paternal attitude in the situation. Its major activities has been by way of recruiting a labor supply. Company officials have had a major hand in the recruitment both of the Japanese and of the citizen labor.

Copy of handbill:

B E E T T H I N N E R S

American sugar bowls will be short at least sixteen million (16,000,000) pounds of Malheur County sugar next year unless immediate relief can be found by sugar beet growers in their search for thinning help. Growers near Vale and Jamieson are facing the loss of not less than 4000 acres of beets that can be saved if help can be found at once. One thousand (1000) workers can save the crop in a week or less if citizens of Southeastern Oregon and Southwestern Idaho respond.

Sixteen million (16,000,000) pounds of sugar will supply one-half (½) pound weekly to 615,384 people for one year or will provide the material to make sufficient powder to fire 22,850 sixteen inch guns once. Your nearest U. S. Employment Service Office can supply you with full information as to wages that will be paid and means of transportation to the fields. The situation is acute and every day means serious loss. Your U. S. Employment office will assist and direct you to fields where help is needed.

Busses will be available at the Ontario, Vale, and Nyssa Employment office for free transportation of workers to the fields. Wages will be at prevailing rates.

The situation to date is this: 21,000 acres of beets were planted in the Nyssa factory area, of these 1,000 acres are now lost, 14,212 acres have been thinned, leaving 5,788 acres yet to thin. During the week of June 1 to June 6, 3,379 acres were thinned. Just a little more effort and the job can be completed with no additional loss.

U N I T E D S T A T E S E M P L O Y M E N T S E R V I C E

T H E A M A L G A M A T E D S U G A R C O M P A N Y

The company is busy experimenting with methods that will reduce labor needs but have not made any great headway up to the present time. It has experimented with cross-blocking but has found that the professional thinners do not like it. It has 50 acres planted to segmented seed on an experimental basis. Such plants came up very irregularly but did well after irrigation and may be widely used next year. A topping and loading machine has been ordered but may not be delivered because of the shortage of necessary materials.

The company is ambitious to expand its operations and hopes to obtain enough of a labor supply that it will be able to do so. Their one handicap in expansion is lack of such a supply.

e. The Growers

The growers were commonly criticized because they were inclined to wait for their labor supply to be brought to them rather than to hunt for workers or to use other means of handling the situation themselves. Even when citizen laborers came out on their farms some said they would rather plow out their beets than go out and thin them themselves.

The farmers, however, were quite helpless in the situation and hated to be dependent on the sugar company for their labor supply. The manager of the sugar company says that some of them will not plant beets again for ten years because of their unfortunate experience this year.

Lack of cooperative endeavor in meeting the situation was obvious in several ways. The more up-and-coming farmers secured the early crews that came into the area and monopolized their labor even after their own thinning was done. When some of the farmers were through with their workers they brought them in to town and dumped them off in the neighborhood of the liquor stores but did not think to report the presence of the workers to local employment service officials.

SUMMARY

The labor situation in the Malheur area has been very tight due to a number of factors; first, the doubling of the acreage in beets, second, the draining away of local labor to the Army and to defense industries, third, the nonarrival of the customary seasonal workers, and fourth, the small number of nonfarm people that could be made available in an emergency.

The situation has been met by concerted activity on the part of the sugar company officials, the Employment Service staff, the Chamber of Commerce, and members of the various agricultural agencies. There has been a certain amount of friction, chiefly over the use of Japanese and citizen labor but this did not delay the work to any large extent.

The shortage of workers actually was not as great as was indicated in the various efforts to obtain outside labor. Outside labor was badly needed but 400 workers would seem to be sufficient to meet the present and future needs. Though the workers from the outside came rather late in the season they still will be able to save all the good beets in the area.

The plow-up this year may be expected to be somewhat larger than usual and the production per acre will also be less than it has been. This, however, will not be due to labor shortage but to the fact that much of the additional land planted this year was of very poor quality. Some also was quite foul with weeds and could not be made ready in one season for sugar beets. An additional 300 to 400 acres were ruined in a hail storm.

Company officials may be expected to use these plow-up figures as a basis for demanding more outside labor. They are afraid that the experience of the farmers this year may scare them out of sugar beet production unless the company can display a large labor force available to do the thinning and harvesting.

Citizen labor was not economically sound but was quite valuable as a morale builder. It built up a patriotic spirit and encouraged the farmers to keep their beets rather than to plow them under and plant some other crop.

In spite of the extreme opposition to the Japanese early in the year they have been readily accepted by the farmers and should get along with very little trouble. They have done such good work as compared with the Mexican beet thinners that farmers are trying to out-bid each other to get them. There is a strong movement among the farmers to get them into their individual camps. This may tend to make them less available to other citizens in the community who may need them even more badly.

People in the area are sure that they raise the best sugar beets in the Nation and feel that the Government should expedite rather than hamper the development of the beet industry there. The present situation offers them the opportunity they have been looking for, provided they can get some help in building up a labor supply.